

VZCZCXRO7209
OO RUEHDBU
DE RUEHNO #0253/01 1630429
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 120429Z JUN 09
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3066
INFO RUEHDX/MOSCOW POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHKV/AMEMBASSY KYIV IMMEDIATE 0226
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 6400
RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI IMMEDIATE 5782
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHNO/USDELMC BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/USNMR SHAPE BE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 000253

NOFORN
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/11/2019
TAGS: [NATO PREL MOPS GG RS UP](#)
SUBJECT: NATO-RUSSIA MINISTERIAL: RUSSIA CAUTIOUSLY
OPTIMISTIC ABOUT DELIVERABLES

REF: A. USNATO 157
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 [1](#)D. MOSCOW 1516
 [1](#)E. MOSCOW 1509

Classified By: Ambassador Ivo Daalder for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C/NF) SUMMERY: In a dramatic change in tone, the Russian Mission to NATO fully engaged in the June 9-10 NATO-Russia Council (NRC) Preparatory Committee (Prep Com) negotiations on deliverables for the NRC June 27 Foreign Ministerial in Corfu. Prior to this week, the Russian Mission had insisted that there was not enough time to prepare deliverables for the Ministerial -- along similar lines as reported by Embassy Moscow in reftels -- and only half-heartedly negotiated in the Prep Com without instructions from Moscow. Russian DCM Soltanovskiy told us that Russian Ambassador Rogozin was more optimistic about Ministerial deliverables after his consultations in Moscow. The Russian MOD, Soltanovskiy said, was the bottleneck in the Russian system and may still hinder this process. Soltanovskiy told us that the consistently positive U.S. message had helped the Russian Mission overcome Moscow's suspicions in the wake of the NATO expulsions of two Russian diplomats. He claimed that the Russian Mission appreciated the deliverables from the draft paper (emailed to EUR/RPM) for possible endorsement at the Ministerial, but said Moscow would still press hard for language in the political chapeau that had so far been unacceptable to all Allies. Regardless of the outcome of these negotiations, the U.S. has united Allies behind a positive vision for hard-headed engagement and frank dialogue with Russia, and set-out a blueprint for taking the NRC forward, which has been well-received by the Russian Mission. Allies, particularly Germany, support the proposed Ministerial deliverables and have played a positive role in these negotiations. END SUMMARY.

RUSSIA MISSION HAS A NEW ATTITUDE (AND INSTRUCTIONS)

[1](#)2. (C/NF) Up until this week, the Russian Mission had expressed grave doubts about the prospects for approving any deliverables for the June 27 NATO-Russia Council (NRC) Ministerial meeting. However, during the June 9-10

negotiations, the tone of the Russian interventions improved dramatically, with frequent references to "instructions from Moscow." Russian DCM Soltanovskiy, the principal Russian negotiator in the NRC Preparatory Committee (Prep Com), actively and enthusiastically engaged in these negotiations and even closed text on a few paragraphs. Soltanovskiy attributed the change to Ambassador Rogozin's recent consultations in Moscow and told us that Rogozin was more optimistic about agreeing a package of deliverables for the NRC Ministerial. Soltanovskiy said that after Rogozin's "productive consultations" in Moscow, the Russian Mission now believes it has the top cover to negotiate in good faith. Soltanovskiy said Rogozin was in a "good mood" about the prospects for Corfu.

13. (C/NF) Soltanovskiy claimed he personally had become attached to the paper and thanked us for being the driving force behind the positive spirit of this exercise. He contended that the consistent U.S. message had been critical in overcoming Moscow's suspicions following the NATO expulsion of two Russian diplomats. Specifically, Soltanovskiy said he was optimistic that NRC members could agree the political green light to restart military-to-military and civilian practical cooperation, as well as a tasking to NRC Ambassadors to streamline the NRC committee structure.

RUSSIAN MOD STILL A BOTTLENECK

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14. (C/NF) Soltanovskiy said the Russian MOD had been the bottleneck which had delayed instructions to the Mission. "The MOD is in complete chaos at the moment and this could still hinder our negotiations," Soltanovskiy told us frankly. However, he said that the Russian Mission was largely in agreement with the U.S. position on deliverables but the sticking point would be on the political chapeau. (Note: The U.S. is advocating a paper that focuses on deliverables to reinvigorate NRC cooperation and dialogue with little emphasis on a political chapeau. The Russian Mission is pushing for a chapeau text that distorts founding principles of NATO-Russia cooperation and that suggests Allies should not have blocked NRC political dialogue during the Georgia crisis. One example lies in the "indivisibility of security" -- Russia seeks to limit this concept from the whole Euro-Atlantic area to just NRC countries. This is a non-starter for most Allies. End Note) Privately, Soltanovskiy suggested that he would urge Moscow to show some flexibility on the political chapeau issue.

DELIVERABLES TO TAKE THE NRC FORWARD

15. (C/NF) In April, USNATO developed and issued a U.S./German/Czech non-paper (emailed to EUR/RPM and others in the interagency), which set the tone and provided the framework for negotiations on ministerial deliverables. The paper currently being negotiated in the NRC for endorsement by Ministers was intended to be a roadmap for taking the NRC forward: it will officially restart mil-to-mil and other practical cooperation and open a much franker and open NRC dialogue. In addition, consensus is building for a Ministerial tasking to streamline the NRC committee structure making it more flexible to build cooperation on new areas of mutual benefit, such as counter-piracy, Afghanistan, missile defense, etc. Moreover, we would like the NRC to become a confidence-building forum in which NATO and Russia could regularly exchange information on military strategy, exercises, and doctrine.

ROGOZIN WANTS TO DRAG OUT THE COURTING PROCESS

¶6. (C/NF) Ambassador Rogozin has suggested in the press that the FM meeting in Corfu would be the first in a series of high-level NRC stand-alone meetings this summer. He said that Defense Ministers and CHODs should also meet. (Note: We have tried to temper Russian expectations for additional stand-alone NRC meetings, encouraging the Russian Mission to fully take advantage of the June 27 FM meeting. End note.)

COMMENT

¶7. (C/NF) Soltanovskiy now assesses a "50-50" chance for the success of these negotiations. If NRC members cannot agree a package of deliverables, however, it would delay, but not derail, full NRC re-engagement. The U.S. is in a strong position regardless of the outcome of the negotiations on Ministerial deliverables. We moved Allies well beyond the internecine squabbling on Russia policy that plagued us during the December and March Foreign Ministerials, uniting Allies behind a policy of hard-headed engagement with Russia.

The Russian Mission appreciates our forward-leaning proposals on taking the NRC forward and our leadership in providing a positive tenor to the NRC. Starting this week, Russia began negotiating in good faith and pressure will build for deliverables for the Ministerial. In the end, it will come down to the political chapeau. We will coordinate with Allies to maintain a unified message on the most egregious Russian political text and present Russia with a tough choice between a strong package of deliverables and its

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unrealistic political text.
DAALDER